IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below:

1.   (Cancelled)

2.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim ~~1~~ 13, wherein the luminance data indicate luminance-distribution characteristic values indicating a horizontal luminance-distribution on the image.

3.   (Previously Presented) A vehicle front-view monitoring system for taking fail-safe measures comprising:

     a camera device for taking an image of a view in front;

     a calculator for calculating luminance data on the image; and

     a determination section for determining whether there is a fail occurring on the monitoring system based on the luminance data, the fail-safe measures being taken if the fail is occurring,

     wherein the luminance data indicate luminance-distribution characteristic values indicating a horizontal luminance-distribution on the image, and

     wherein the determination section determines the fail based on a parameter obtained by the calculator and normalizes the luminance-distribution characteristic values by a shutter speed for the camera device.

2

4.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 3 13, wherein the luminance data indicate luminance-distribution characteristic values that include the maximum value of addition of luminance on the image.

5.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 3 13, wherein the luminance data indicate luminance-distribution characteristic values that include a luminance-addition variance on the image.

6.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 3 13, wherein the luminance data include the number of data related to luminance edges in a predetermined monitoring area on the image.

7.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 6, wherein the number of related to luminance edges data is the number of luminance edges.

8.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 6, wherein the number of data related to luminance edges is the number of distance data obtain by a pair of cameras of the camera device.

9.   (Original) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 6, wherein the monitoring area is set on the upper section of the image where a vehicle running ahead is displayed.

10.   (Previously Presented) A vehicle front-view monitoring system for taking fail-safe

measures comprising:

a camera device for taking an image of a view in front;

a calculator for calculating luminance data on the image; and

a determination section for determining whether there is a fail occurring on the

monitoring system based on the luminance data, the fail-safe measures being taken if the

fail is occurring,

wherein the calculator calculates a luminance center as the luminance data, the

luminance center corresponding to a horizontal position on the image at which luminance

are converged, and the determination section determines the fail by evaluating the

horizontal luminance distribution on the image based on the luminance center.

11.   (Currently Amended) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to

claim 10, wherein the calculator calculates a luminance moment indicating the horizontal

luminance distribution based on the luminance center and the determination section

determines the fail based on the luminance moment.

12.   (Original) The vehicle front-view monitoring system according to claim 3, wherein

the calculator further calculates the number of data as another parameter related to

luminance edges in a predetermined monitoring area on the image, the determination

section determining the fail based on the parameters.

13. (New) A vehicle front-view monitoring system, comprising:

a camera device for taking an image of a view in front of the vehicle;

an image recognition device which receives image data from said camera device;

a vehicle state alteration device which is in communication with said image recognition device and alters a vehicle condition based upon image data criteria;

a determination section for determining whether there is a monitoring system failure based on a luminance state condition; and

a fail safe implementation device which places said monitoring system in a fail safe mode based on the determination section determining a luminance based monitoring system failure has occurred, which fail safe mode precludes an activity in said vehicle state alteration device.

14. (New) The monitoring system of claim 13, further comprising:

a calculator for calculating luminance data on the image;

wherein said determination section for determining whether there is a monitoring system failure occurring on the monitoring system based on a luminance state condition determines whether there is a monitoring system failure based on luminance calculations derived from said calculator.

15. (New) The monitoring system of claim 13 wherein said luminance state condition is a luminance condition deemed to present a potential for a lowered monitoring accuracy condition, and wherein said fail safe implementation device precludes any activity in said vehicle state alteration device until a restatement condition is established.

16. (New) The monitoring system of claim 13 wherein said vehicle condition to be altered is a warning system and said fail safe implementation device prevents said warning system from activating.

17. (New) The monitoring system of claim 13 wherein said fail safe implementation device prevents the vehicle state alteration device from activating a vehicle control change in said vehicle.

18. (New) The monitoring system of claim 17 wherein the vehicle control change of said vehicle state alteration device, which is precluded from activating in the fail safe mode, is a vehicle slow down control change.

19 (New) The monitoring system of claim 13 further comprising requirement means for determining whether failsafe interruption criteria is present, which requirement means is associated with one or more of the following criteria;

a) that an upper luminance saturation factor LR1 is larger than a lower luminance saturation factor LR2;

b) that a number of luminance edges EN of an area of the vehicle in front is smaller than a reference number;

c) that a number of the calculation of the distance data is smaller than a reference number;

d) that a luminance-distribution characteristics parameter normalized by a shutter speed VAR' is greater than a reference value;

e) that a maximum addition of luminance normalized by a shutter speed Amax' is larger than a reference value;

f) that a normalized luminance moment LM' is smaller than center corresponding to a horizontal position on the image which luminance are converged is smaller than a reference value.

20. (New) The monitoring system of claim 19 wherein the requirement means determines that a fail safe mode interruption is appropriate if one or more of criteria a to f is not satisfied.

21. (New) The monitoring system of claim 19 wherein the requirement means determines that a fail safe mode interruption is appropriate if just one of criteria a to f is not satisfied.

22. (New) The monitoring system of claim 19 wherein the requirement means determines that fail safe mode activation is appropriate if one or more of criteria a to f is satisfied.

23. (New) The monitoring system of claim 19 wherein the requirement means determines that fail safe mode activation is appropriate if two or more of criteria a to f are satisfied.

24. (New) The monitoring system of claim 19 wherein the requirement means determines that fail safe mode activation is appropriate only if all of criteria a to f are satisfied.

25. (New) The monitoring system of claim 13 wherein said determining means prevents said fail safe mode from activating if a vehicle is recognized ahead or a distance to a vehicle is detected based on said image recognition device.

26. (New) The monitoring system of claim 13 wherein said determining means includes means for preventing said fail safe mode from activating based on camera shutter speed.